

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

1.9
H755R

IMPROVING THE FARM HOME

A radio talk by Dr. Louise Stanley, Chief, Bureau of Home Economics, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period, National Farm and Home Hour, Tuesday, December 26, 1933.

--ooCOoo--

You have probably been seeing much in the paper recently about the various pieces of work which are being done under the Civil Works Administration as part of the general campaign to spread employment and at the same time use those needing work to do jobs which have been very much needed but we have not been able to get done.

I am going to tell you this morning about one such project in which I think you women will be interested, and on which we want your help. There are many who hope that in this recovery program the home is not going to be lost sight of. The building industries have been very hard hit, because home repairs, home modernizing, and the adding of needed equipment have been the first things which people have tended to stop when money became tight. We have no idea just what the need is to bring homes up to really livable condition, not to say to bring them into condition which will make them as healthful as a good standard of living would require. By knowing more definitely just what these needs are, by making a study which would indicate what improvements are within the limit of possibility, it should be possible, we are told, to adjust things so many of these improvements can be made at a lower cost price and under better methods of financing than if we wait for each family to make such changes as they come along. Large-scale handling of housing repairs and replacements is a new idea to many, but it offers a solution to both the home owners and the building trades. Because of the farm situation the rural home has been harder hit in many cases than urban or village homes. The cash income on the farm has been so low that there has been a tendency to let things run down to such a level that unless some repairs are made soon it is going to be difficult to get many homes back into livable condition again. A leaky roof not repaired may mean new interior finishing later. In many cases this will mean added cost, because not only in clothing but in housing "a stitch in time saves nine." So it has been decided something must be done. The first step in a program for better rural housing is to find out just what the situation is.

The Civil Works Administration had been endeavoring to find useful pieces of work for women. This seemed to fit in with their plans, so we are using women needing employment to make a rural housing survey. At first we had hoped we could reach every farm home, but in the time which is available that seemed impossible and a well-selected 10 percent sample has been chosen. Practically every State is going to cooperate in the study. Only three seem uncertain. The survey portion of this study, which is the part I am going to tell you about today, is to be conducted in at least 45 States under the auspices of the State extension service, with the advice of the home management specialist and agricultural engineer. A woman available for employment under Civil Works Administration is being put in to handle the work in each State under their direction. In each of 300 counties there is a woman in charge, with an agricultural engineer or a contractor to help in determining the needed repairs. The visiting from house to house will be done by 11 women in each county and

there will be three clerks who will assist in tabulating the records in the counties and getting the data in form to be sent to Washington as a basis for working out feasible plans for improving rural homes.

We want to ask your cooperation in this study. You will be asked a number of questions. We want to know just what things you feel are desirable and necessary to better your own house. You may need nothing more than paint and a little refinishing inside. It may be you want water brought into the house, a kitchen sink a bath room. Electric current in certain regions is going to be cheaper. In what ways can electricity serve you best, so as to lighten the burdens of housekeeping? Perhaps it is a good circulating heater you want, weather stripping, insulating. These questions are foremost now, we found in a preliminary study. There are a number of different questions. Some questions are planned to find out what changes would mean most to you. Will you find out whether or not your county is one of those being studied, and if it is, will you talk it over with the family and be ready to answer the questions when the field agent comes to you, will you cooperate by greeting the agent who comes to you in the friendly manner in which this survey has been planned? Its success rests largely on you and your helpful cooperation.

Later on I will tell you something about the next steps in this project. Now we want you to make an inventory of repairs, replacements, and additions needed and which you would put first in importance. If you would like a check list to help you in this we would be glad to send you one. We should like to see the wheels of industry put first to turning out the materials needed to improve farm homes.

--oo00oo--